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Castro plan to destabilize U.S. may be broadening

By Daniel James

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NEW YORK—A recent defector from Cuba's General Intelligence Directorate (DGI) says that the April, 1980, flood of 125,000 refugees from the port of Mariel was part of a plan to destabilize the United States and relieve Cuba of "excess" population it could not support.

In an interview, defector Genaro Perez said that this "Plan Bravo" was conceived by Cuban President Fidel Castro and the DGI. Before defecting last year, Perez operated under cover of Havanatur, a DGI-run travel agency in Miami that maintained surveillance of Cuban-Americans visiting Cuba and tried to recruit intelligence agents from among them.

In June, 1980, the CIA testified before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that it had warned the State Department, National Security Council, "and higher" authorities as early as Jan. 31, 1980, of Castro's intention to unload large numbers of new refugees on the U.S. The CIA added that Castro's removal of security guards from Havana's Peruvian Embassy on April 4, 1980—causing thousands of Cubans to invade that embassy—"was probably calculated to precipitate a crisis and force the U.S. to accept sizable numbers of new refugees."

Perez charges that Plan Bravo would "unleash violence in the U.S.—riots, disturbances, bombings, shoot-outs, assaults on banks—in an effort to terrorize the American public and government."

HE ADDS THAT Puerto Rican terrorists are vital to Castro's plan and would encourage violence "in all parts of the U.S.—not only in New York or Chicago but also Washington, Miami, Los Angeles." In addition, Perez says, the plan involves the incitement of racial conflict among Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and "especially blacks."

U.S. intelligence officers express concern about the increased activities of Puerto Rican terrorists aided and abetted by the DGI. And, intentional or otherwise, Miami—where most of the Mariel refugees ended up—became the scene of riots as unemployed blacks protested not just the brutal murder of a black by white police, but the refugees' alleged seizure of available jobs.

These troubles discouraged tourism, contributing to a serious decline in Miami's economy while fanning blacks' and whites' resentment toward the new refugees and toward Cubans in general.

Tomas Regalado—a respected reporter whose "Cuba Today" radio program on Miami's WHRC is listened to widely in Cuba—adds another charge. Under cover of the chaotic boatlift, he says, Castro sent "hundreds" of new intelligence operatives to the U.S.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT estimates that more than 200,000 Cubans hold exit visas and are ready to sail for the U.S. upon Castro's signal. However, Perez believes that Castro would prefer to succeed with another plan—the first-priority "Plan Alpha." Its goal is to normalize relations with the U.S., beginning with removal of the 20-year trade embargo against Cuba.

Although his failed Marxist programs made a shambles of the Cuban economy, Castro has made the embargo his whipping boy and the keystone of his U.S. policy. The embargo choked off international credit to Cuba, without which the country cannot buy the capital goods required for economic survival. Therefore, Castro is attempting to secure normalized relations while simultaneously using U.S. businessmen and DGI commercial fronts to violate the embargo and bring in forbidden products.

This and all other DGI operations in the U.S. are directed from the Cuban mission to the UN in New York. Although Cuba is among the smallest members, the mission, with a staff of 50 to 80, is the second largest in the UN. As many as 75 per cent of those accredited to the mission are not diplomats, but officers of the DGI and other Cuban intelligence agencies.

Some of them are officers of the Department of State Security, or DSE, which controls Cuba's internal security. Others belong to the Department of America and the Cuban Institute for Friendship with Peoples, or ICAP, intelligence agencies that keep visitors to Cuba under surveillance.

NOT SURPRISINGLY, many of these members of the Cuban mission don't bother to show up for regular UN duties. At least two ranking members who are listed as "political counselors" are actually high intelligence officers. One is Mario Monzon, 38, chief of all DGI operations in the U.S. The other is Alfredo Garcia Almeida, who heads the America Department here and performs ICAP functions.

Monzon answers not only to his superiors in Havana but also to Moscow's intelligence organization, the KGB, through its station chief in New York. The KGB created the DGI in the early-1960s and, though still a satellite of the Soviet agency, is rated professionally as among the world's top five intelligence services, after the KGB, the CIA, Israel's Mossad, and Britain's M16.

The DGI has special value for the KGB because its officers, as accredited diplomats, are allowed complete freedom of

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